

recognize that the mission of the Peace Corps is as important as it has ever been. At a time when there is still tremendous need outside our borders, Peace Corps volunteers must continue their mission of helping others help themselves. Additionally, those volunteers must continue to serve—as they have in the past—as our nation's citizen ambassadors to people in other countries, and, once they arrive back home, as liaisons between the citizens of our country and the citizens of the country where they served.

I hope that Congress will continue to support and expand this vital institution for decades to come.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 4, 2010*

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, on Monday, February 22 I was unavoidably absent from the House Chamber. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 49 and 50.

#### NATIONAL PEACE CORPS WEEK

#### HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 4, 2010*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, as a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer who spent two years in Ethiopia with my wife Patti eradicating small pox and building schools, it is my pleasure to recognize National Peace Corps Week.

Forty-nine years ago this week, President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps as a way to show the world that the United States is interested in helping our struggling neighbors across the globe. Since then, nearly 200,000 Americans have served in the Peace Corps in 139 countries around the world.

Peace Corps volunteers educate children, treat illnesses, assist local businesses, introduce new technologies, modernize agricultural techniques, and help protect local water supplies. To millions of people in the developing world, Peace Corps volunteers are the face of America, and we are a safer and more appreciated nation because of it.

To the 7,671 volunteers around the world presently engaged in the Peace Corps' noble mission, thank you for your service. So long as I am in Congress, I will resolutely support you in your efforts. You stand on the shoulders of giants, and you are a vital contributor to a more peaceful and just world.

#### RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF JAMES B. BLASINGAME

#### HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 4, 2010*

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, today I congratulate James B. Blasingame on

his retirement from the Alaska Railroad. Mr. Blasingame started at the Alaska Railroad at age 35 starting as a programmer. He has moved up through the company culminating his career as Vice President of Corporate Affairs. In 1985, Mr. Blasingame was appointed by the Alaska Railroad as the Federal coordinator where he oversaw the transfer of the Federally-owned Alaska Railroad to the State of Alaska.

The Alaska Railroad has been an outstanding organization in Alaska promoting expansion and economic development throughout the state. I commend Mr. Blasingame and his tireless effort within the company to improve the railroad's operations, facilities and safety performance. Not only do I want to commend him on his work, I would also like to applaud the amount of time he spent volunteering on a number of non-profit, civic boards and organizations, including Providence Hospital, Anchorage School Business Partnership, World Trade Center of Alaska and Credit Union National Association.

Today, I congratulate and recognize Jim on his retirement and years of service to Alaskan residents and the development of the Alaska Railroad and wish him good luck in the next chapter of life.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to submit a resolution approved by the Alaska Railroad Board of Directors commending Jim for his service.

#### RESOLUTION 2009-58

Whereas, James B. Blasingame, at the young age of 35, began his employment with the Alaska Railroad as a Programmer and was later promoted to various positions including Supply Analyst, Management Analyst, and Executive Administration Director leading to his ascension in 1993 to Vice President of Corporate Affairs; and

Whereas, James B. Blasingame not only loves history, but has helped to make history at the Alaska Railroad, by serving as the State Manager of the Alaska Railroad Transfer Project supporting the effort in the early 1980s to transfer the Railroad from Federal to State ownership; and

Whereas, James B. Blasingame has served as the Alaska Railroad Board of Directors' Board Secretary since 1985, managing corporate governance, policy development, government and community relations, corporate asset oversight including records preservation and philanthropy; and

Whereas, throughout his tenure as Board Secretary and Vice President Corporate Affairs for the Alaska Railroad, James B. Blasingame was part of a team instrumental in qualifying the Alaska Railroad for federal grants used to improve the Railroad's operations, facilities and safety performance; and

Whereas, James B. Blasingame has worked tirelessly to mentor fellow railroaders, earning terms of endearment such as "Mother", "Dutch Uncle", and "Oracle" and instilling an understanding in all for our past and a commitment to our future as a state-owned enterprise that safely operates on a self-sustaining basis and supports the economic development of our state; and

Whereas, James B. Blasingame has served our Alaska community through his volunteer time and efforts on a number of non-profit, civic boards and organizations, including Providence Hospital, Downtown Partnership, Association, Anchorage School Business Partnership, World Trade Center of Alaska, Alaska Credit Union League, Denali/Alaskan Federal Credit Union, Credit Union National Association; and

*Therefore be it resolved*, the Alaska Railroad Board of Directors extends its most sincere

appreciation to James B. Blasingame for his long-standing dedication to the Alaska Railroad and his distinctive leadership role in the maturation of the Railroad into an award winning, world class state-owned corporation; and

*Be it further resolved*, that since James B. Blasingame has invested countless hours toward the development of the Alaska Railroad and because his dedication warrants permanent recognition, the Alaska Railroad Corporation Board of Directors hereby adopts this resolution renaming the Alaska Railroad's Denali Board Room the "James B. Blasingame Board Room".

#### NATIONAL PEACE CORPS WEEK, THE 49TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREATION OF THE PEACE CORPS

#### HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 4, 2010*

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, I am continually inspired by the great philanthropy and giving nature of the American people. When humanity suffers, where calamity arises—floods in Indonesia, earthquakes in Haiti or Chile, war-torn landscapes around the world or in poverty stricken populations in the Sudan—Americans respond with their time, energy and sacrifice. This outpouring of generosity to foreign lands and different cultures is a uniquely American trait. The Peace Corps, created 49 years ago this week, embodies that trait.

It was President John F. Kennedy who urged Americans to serve their country by working in developing countries and their local villages to enhance the quality of life for others. Approximately 7,600 Peace Corps Volunteers, including five from Southwest Missouri, are serving in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South America, Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific Islands.

I am proud of the service of the five Southwest Missourians currently volunteering in the Peace Corps. Megan Abbott began her service in Belize four months ago. Austin Durr has been in Paraguay since 2007. Laura Pegram has served in Botswana since June 2008. Bruce Taylor has served for one year in Kenya and will serve another year. Scott Tuttle has been in Niger since 2008. Leaving behind the comforts and conveniences of home, Peace Corps volunteers like Abbot, Durr, Pegram, Taylor and Tuttle are symbols of our nation's commitment to progress, opportunity and development in the developing world.

Their desire to make a difference, like that of 200,000 Americans who have served since 1961, has improved the lives of millions of people around the world.

Peace Corps volunteers learn languages and receive extensive cross-cultural training, enabling them to function effectively at a professional level. Volunteers have made lasting contributions around the world in agriculture, business development, information technology, health, education, HIV/AIDS, youth and the environment.

Recognizing the legions of Peace Corps volunteers, past and present, who work hard everyday to improve the lives of the people they assist affirms our nation's commitment to helping people help themselves in the pursuit of